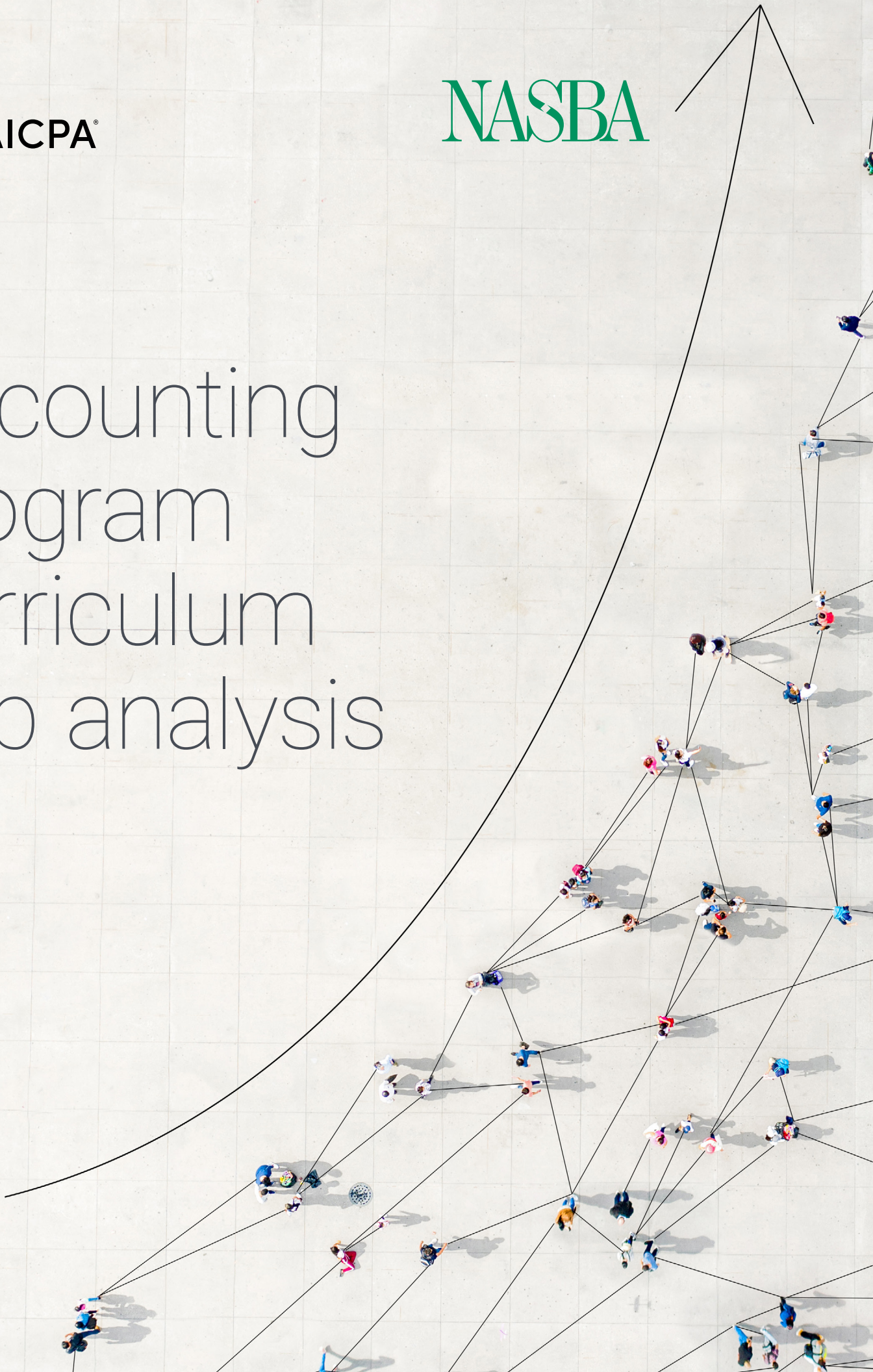




# Accounting program curriculum gap analysis



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# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our *Accounting Program Curriculum Gap Analysis Report*. This report describes the research the AICPA® and NASBA have undertaken to better understand what resources accounting educators need to help evolve their curricula. We reached out to over 1,200 university accounting department chairs across the country to ask them if their accounting programs are teaching topics such as data analytics, IT audit, cybersecurity and more. We received 317 responses from small to large accounting programs throughout the United States.

It's never been a more exciting time to pursue a CPA license. The role of today's CPA has evolved. Newly licensed CPAs need deeper skill sets, more competencies and greater knowledge of emerging technologies. That's why the CPA licensure model is changing.

[The CPA Evolution initiative](#), a joint project between the AICPA and NASBA, aims to transform the CPA licensure model to recognize the rapidly changing skills and competencies the practice of accounting requires today and will require in the future. Aspiring CPAs who are college freshmen will be among the first to take the updated version of the Uniform CPA Examination when it launches in 2024.

Accounting educators play a vital role in preparing students to pursue the CPA under this new licensure model. We performed the research in this report to help us understand where faculty may experience challenges so that we can help aid them in their curriculum transitions.

The findings in this report show us that there are major gaps in accounting education today in several crucial areas for accounting students. For example, we learned that while around 64% of accounting programs are teaching data analytics, fewer than half of accounting programs teach emerging topics such as IT governance and cybersecurity. Where these topics are being covered, they are often being covered in only a couple of class sessions. As we expect that the new CPA Exam will cover many of these emerging topics, we are using the results from this report to inform our continued creation of faculty resources.

Faculty can find existing resources on AICPA's [Academic Resource Hub](#), a free database of content from the AICPA, accounting firms, academics and AICPA teaching-award winners that will help faculty prepare students for the rapidly evolving demands of the profession. The hub contains over 200 resources for a range of class levels on topics such as data analytics and cybersecurity to use in classroom instruction, research or guidance. New resources will continue to be added.

Throughout 2021, we will hold a series of [faculty webcasts](#), including regular updates on CPA Evolution, and deep dives into emerging topics to include in accounting courses.

In June 2021, we will launch our model curriculum that will demonstrate how accounting programs could align with the core + disciplines licensure model.

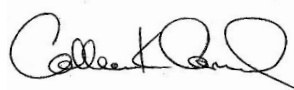
We want to thank all the universities that participated in this survey. We look forward to continuing to work with the academic community throughout this time of transition.

As we work through the next couple of years in defining the new Exam, developing academic resources and preparing students and CPA candidates, we want to hear from you. Please continue to ask us questions and share your feedback by contacting us at [Feedback@EvolutionofCPA.org](mailto:Feedback@EvolutionofCPA.org).

Sincerely,



**Susan S. Coffey, CPA, CGMA**  
CEO – Public Accounting, AICPA



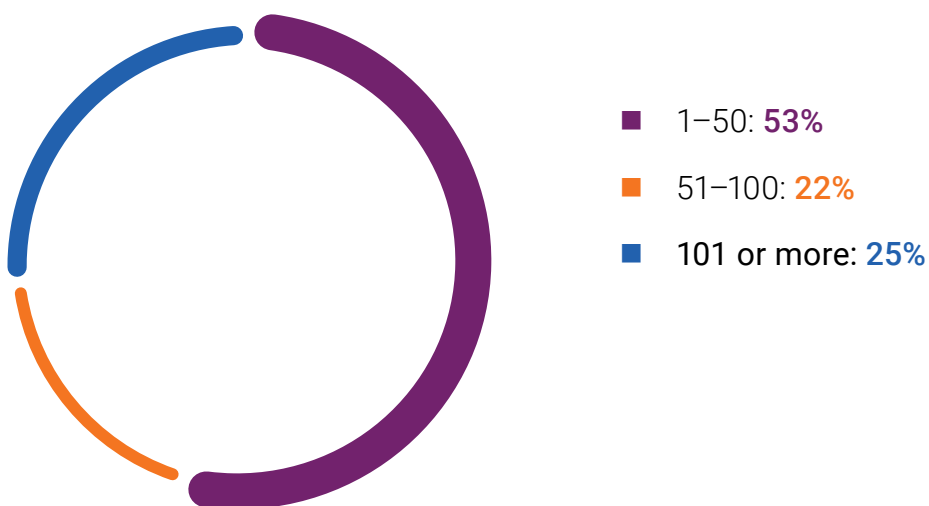
**Colleen K. Conrad, CPA**  
COO and EVP, NASBA

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### Survey respondents

Total Respondents – 317

Respondents by school size (by new undergraduate enrollments in accounting program each year)

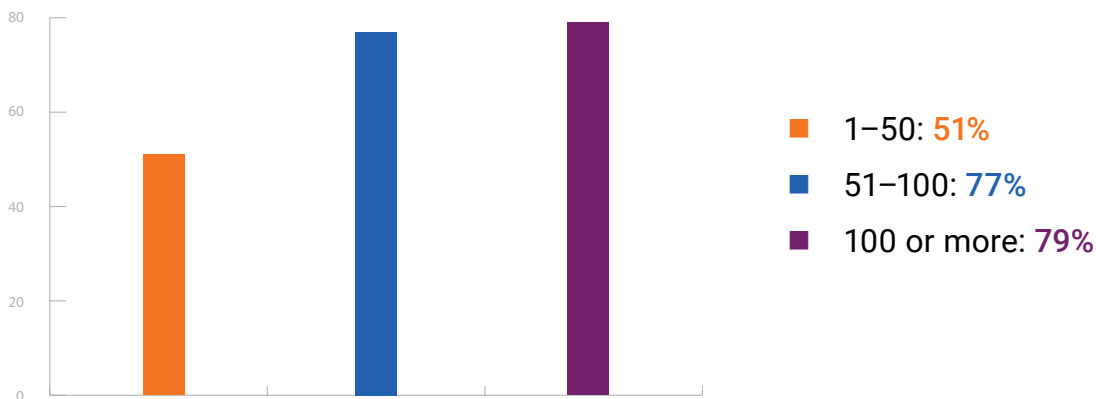


# Data analytics

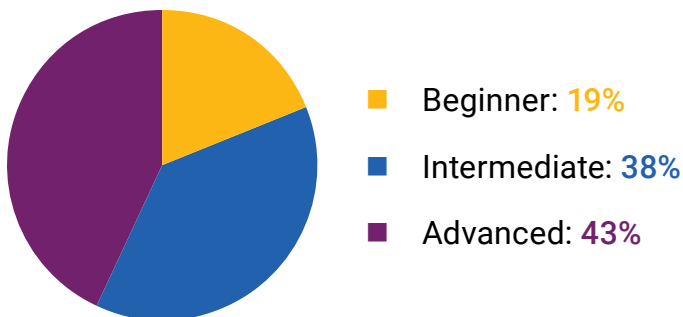
## Does your accounting program cover data analytics and/or modeling?

Process of gathering, modeling and transforming data to highlight useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision-making.

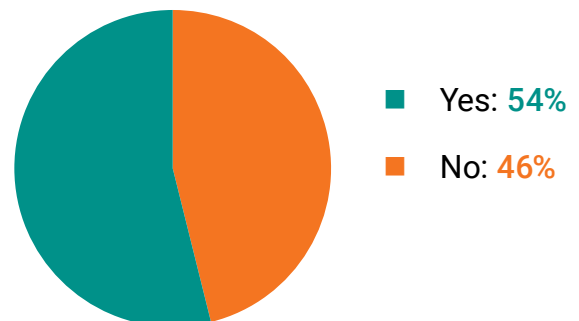
Yes – 64%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insights

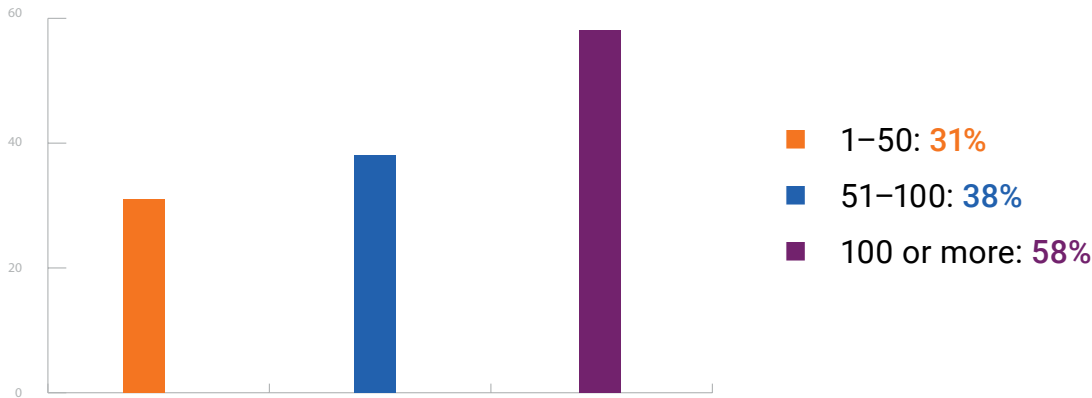
- Many of the respondents are embedding data analytics into Accounting Information Systems and Intermediate Accounting.
- Of the programs embedding data analytics into Accounting Information Systems, there is a big range of depth of coverage. Programs are dedicating between two and twelve class sessions to the topic.

# Predictive analytics

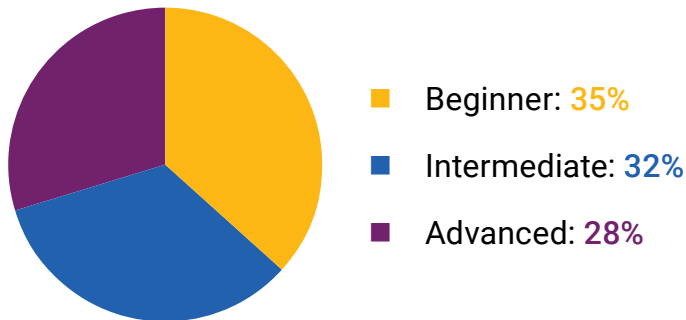
## Does your accounting program cover predictive analytics?

Process of using statistics and modeling to determine future performance based on current and historical data.

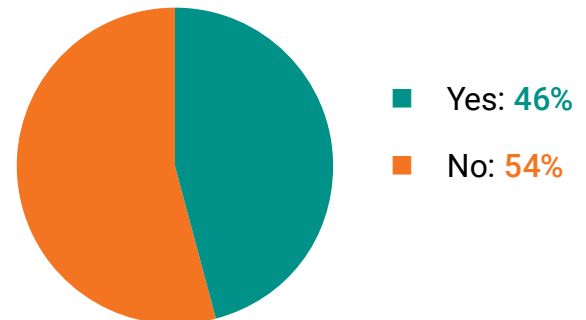
Yes – 40%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insights

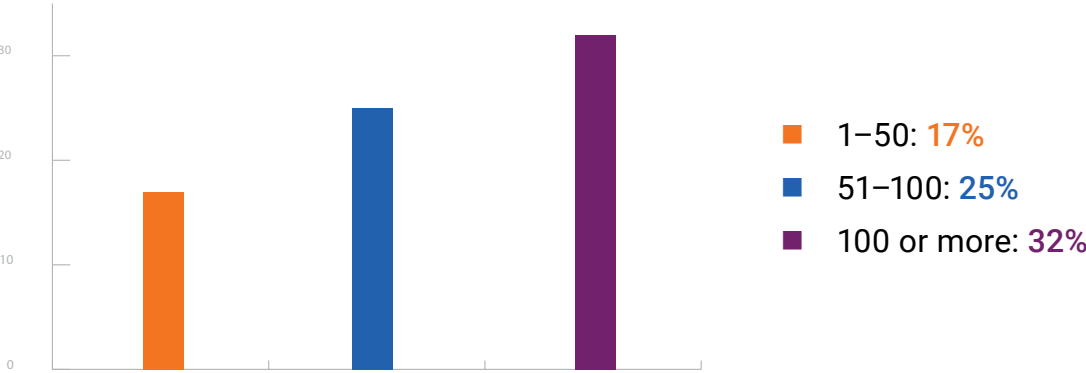
- Several of the respondents are covering predictive analytics in only one or two Accounting Information Systems class sessions.
- Other respondents are embedding predictive analytics across many courses – including Audit and Statistics.

# Systems and organization control engagements (SOC)

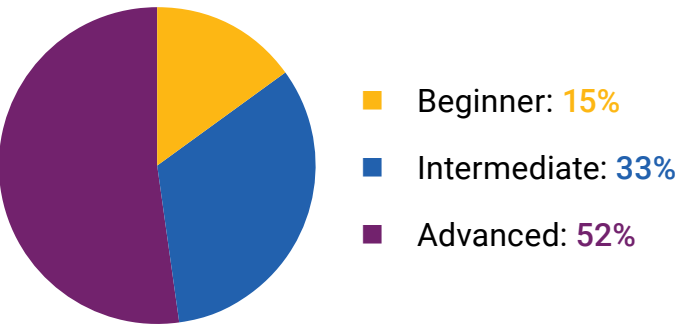
## Does your accounting program cover SOC?

A suite of service offerings CPAs may provide in connection with system-level controls of a service organization or entity-level controls of other organizations.

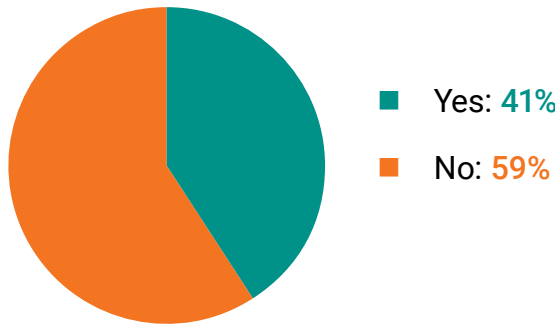
Yes – 23%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insights

- Many respondents are embedding SOC into Audit and Accounting Information Systems courses.
- Several of the respondents embedding SOC into other courses are covering it in one or two class sessions.

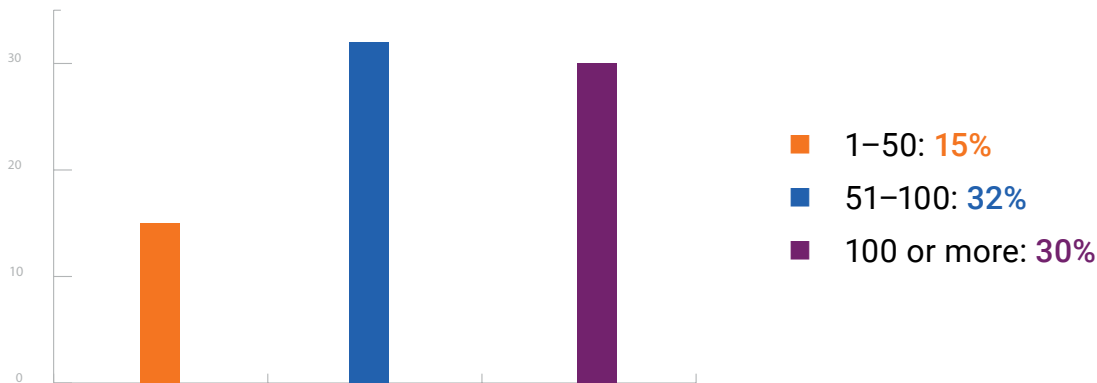


# Digital acumen

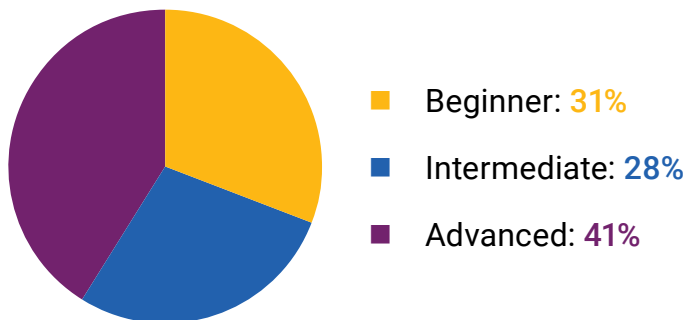
## Does your accounting program cover digital acumen?

Knowing how to leverage digital innovations.

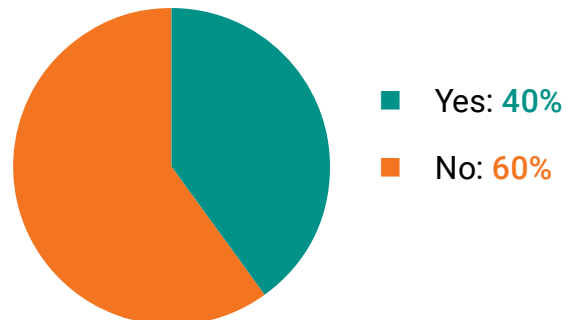
Yes – 23%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insights

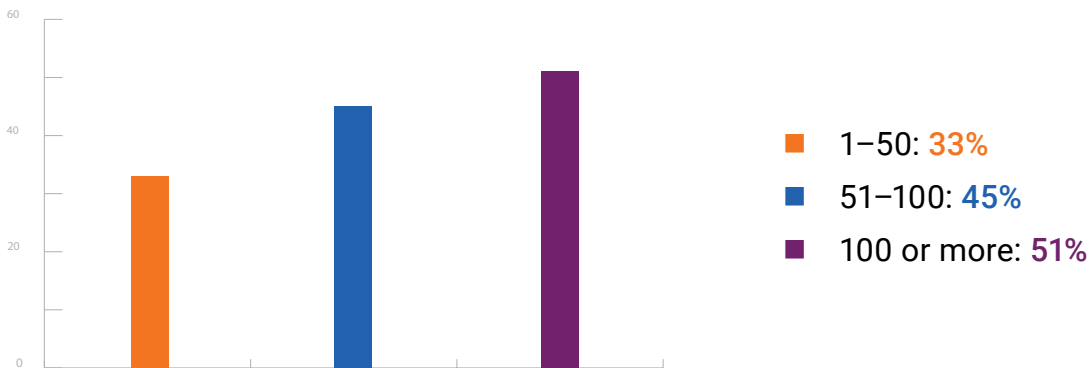
- Most respondents embedding digital acumen into other courses are embedding it into Accounting Information Systems.
- Several of the respondents embedding digital acumen into Accounting Information Systems are covering it in two class sessions.

# Cybersecurity

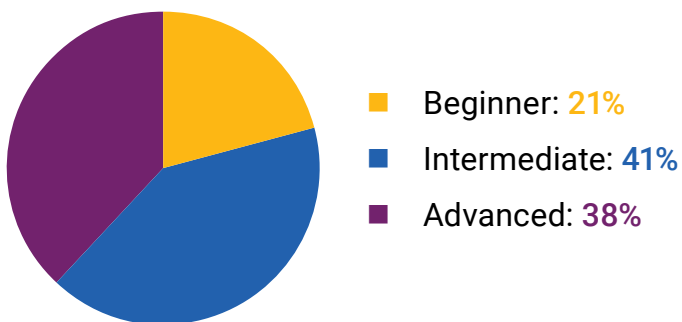
## Does your accounting program cover cybersecurity?

Understanding, identifying, designing, implementing and monitoring processes/systems used to enable security of information.

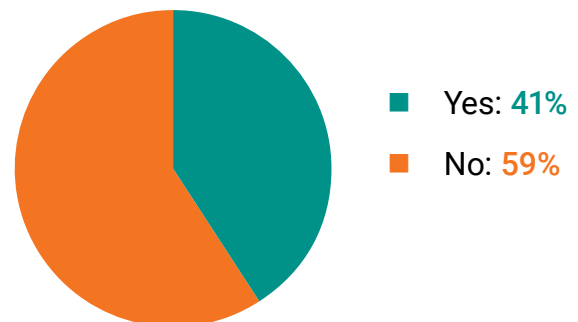
Yes – 40%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insights

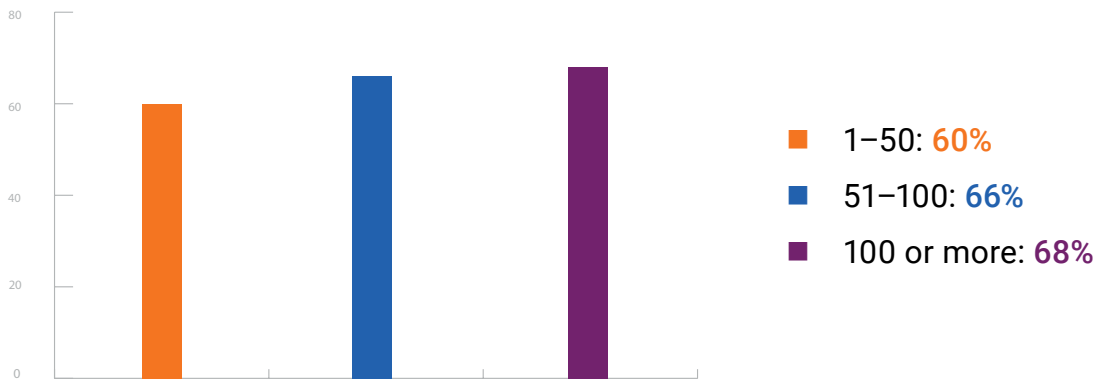
- Many respondents are embedding cybersecurity into Accounting Information Systems courses.
- Accounting Information Systems courses are covering cybersecurity in anywhere from one class session to a full three weeks of the course.

# IT audit

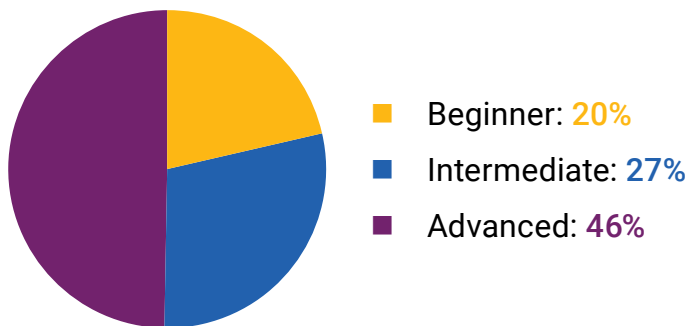
## Does your accounting program cover IT Audit?

Evaluate risk management practices, internal control systems and compliance with regulations and corporate policies.

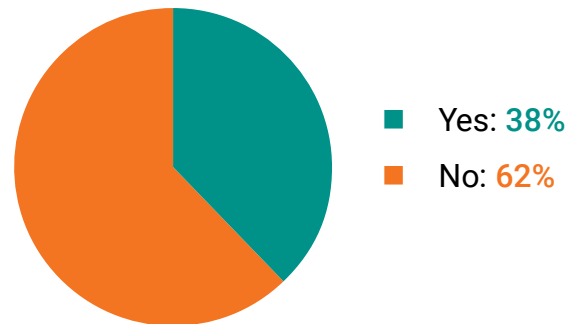
Yes – 63%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insights

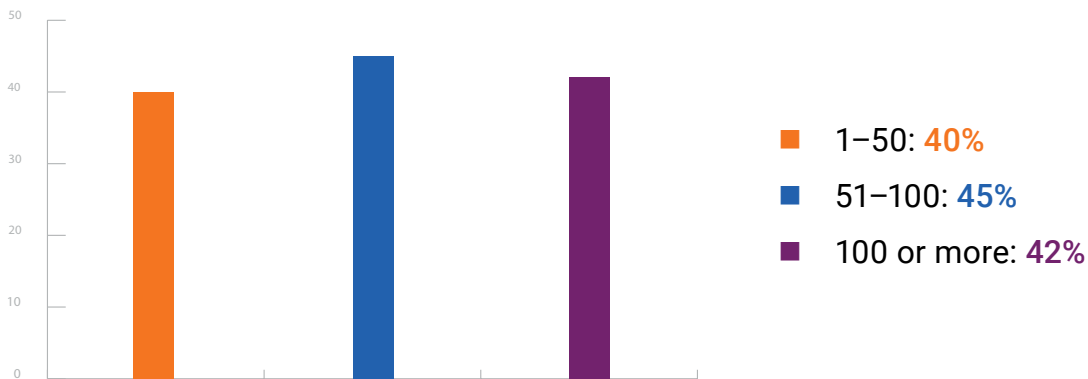
- Most respondents that are embedding IT Audit into other courses are embedding it into Audit and Accounting Information Systems.
- Some respondents are embedding IT Audit into one or two class sessions in undergrad Audit courses, but are covering it more extensively at the graduate level.

# IT governance

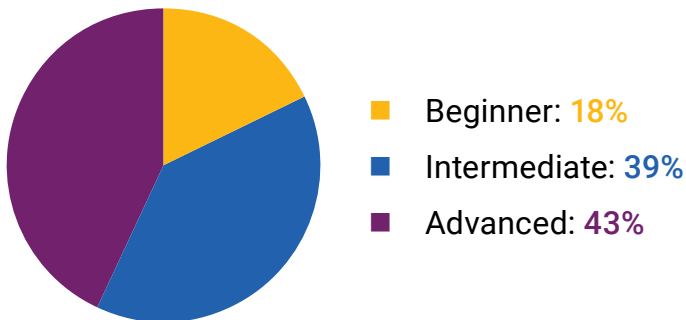
## Does your accounting program cover IT governance?

Ensuring that an organization's data and information remains safe, secure and in the proper hands.

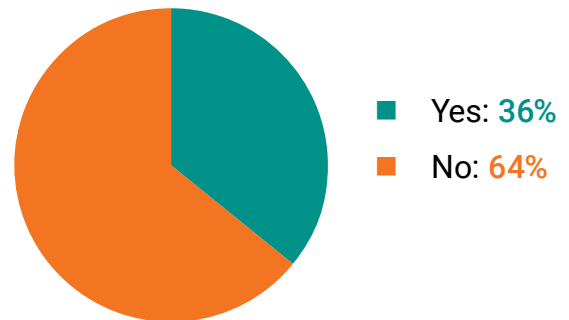
Yes – 41%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insight

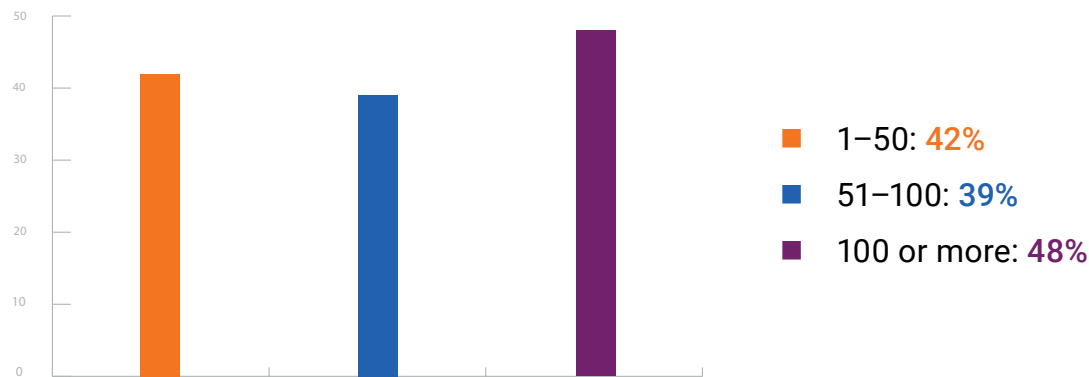
- Many of the respondents are embedding IT governance into one or two class sessions in Audit or Accounting Information Systems.

# IT risks and controls

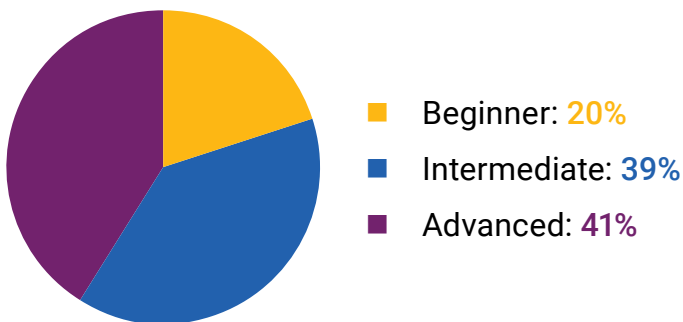
## Does your accounting program cover IT risks and controls?

Planning, managing and monitoring rapidly changing technologies to deliver and support new products and services.

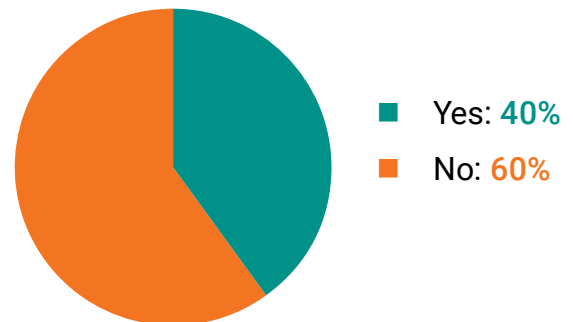
Yes – 43%



## Highest level of undergrad coverage



## Coverage in graduate programs



### Key insight

- Many of the respondents are embedding IT Risks and Controls into Audit or Accounting Information Systems.

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